

I support media diversity

I am writing to express in the strongest possible terms my concern about the evident move toward deregulation of media ownership. The proposed changes in the limits on media ownership are not in the public interest and should not be implemented.

Control of our nation's media environment is already highly concentrated. The most obvious recent evidence of this is the failure of most major news outlets to adequately report on the issue of media deregulation currently before the FCC. Public debate on this issue of profound common concern has been severely limited, without doubt due to private, corporate interests who would simply rather not have Americans examining critically and publicly the question of who would benefit most from deregulation.

If anything, limits on media ownership should be tightened, not loosened. The FCC should be seeking the public interest. The interest of the public in the United States is first and foremost in maintaining the elements that make our democracy and democratic participation possible. Those elements include government institutions and actors who consult with American society and seek to represent its diversity and its values in taking the decisions that affect our lives. The FCC should actively promote a free and open and sustained public discussion regarding what a change in ownership rules entails, and regarding what the arguments for and against such changes are, and should provide a compelling argument IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST for its eventual ruling. I am disturbed at evidence that Chairman Powell is by-passing democratic procedures and debate in order to reach a foregone conclusion consistent with private interests.

Our democracy also depends on the diversity of opinion (not only of media outlets, but of a broad range of opinions) facilitated by multiple free-standing news and information sources. Providing Rupert Murdoch (or anyone else for that matter) the legal means to further consolidate control over our national cultural environment, means allowing him to amplify his voice while elbowing aside smaller, more local media. The consequences for American democratic practice are predictable and disturbing to contemplate. It's a little like holding a public assembly but deciding to only provide microphones to a handful of people in the audience. The rest of us will get heard only if we already agree with the small number of amplified voices.

sincerely,  
Bruce Campbell